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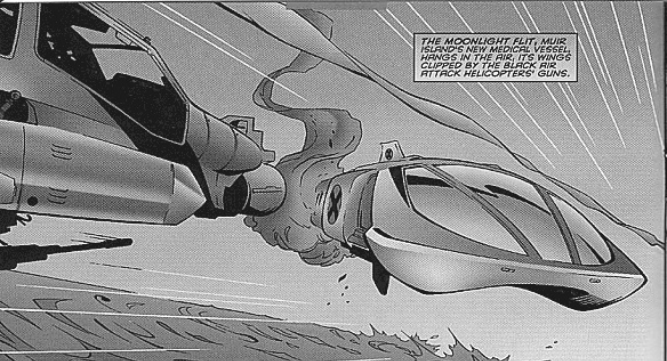
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WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE:
ALISTAIR STUART ONCE RAN
THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S
WEIRD HAPPENINGS ORGANIZATION,
A PARANORMAL INVESTIGATION GROUP.

THEIR POWER
WAS USURPED
BY THE SINISTER MILITARY
INTELLIGENCE TEAM BLACK
AIR AND THINGS STARTED
GOING WRONG.

AFRAID FOR HIS
LIFE, ALISTAIR
RAN, EXCALIBUR, THE MUTANT
TEAM BASED ON THE SCOTT'S
ISLE OF MUIR, IS BRINGING
HIM BACK HOME TO HELP HIM.

AND BLACK AIR
IS WAITING.



THE MOONLIGHT FLIT, MUIR ISLAND'S NEW MEDICAL VESSEL, HANGS IN THE AIR, ITS WINGS CLIPPED BY THE BLACK AIR ATTACK HELICOPTERS' GUNS.

THE MOONLIGHT FLIT IS UNARMED.

THEY'VE
FOUND ME,
WE'LL ALL
DIE --

ALISTAIR,
PLEASE DON'T
DIG OUR GRAVES
UNTIL WE'RE
LAYING DOWN,
Hm?

OKAY --
WE'LL HAVE TO
DO THIS THE OLD-
FASHIONED WAY,
MEGGIN.

THE
FLIT'S SET TO
AUTO-HOVER -- WE
NEED TO ELIMINATE
THOSE CHOPPERS
FAST.

YOU'RE
TEAM LEADER,
KURT -- TELL
ME YOUR
PLAN.

WHEN
YOU SEE THE
FIRST CHOPPER
GO DOWN,
HIT THE AIR
AND --

-- AND,
WHY -- DO
SOMETHING.

KURT WAGNER
TELEPORTS --



— AND
ACROSS
THE WATER,
INTO THE
FIRST
COCKPIT
HE SAW.

GUTEN TAG,
PILOTEN.

NNG--

CHEKK

Oops.

NO
PILOTS
LEFT.

HRS
EVERYBODY
GOT THEIR
LIFEJACKETS
ON?

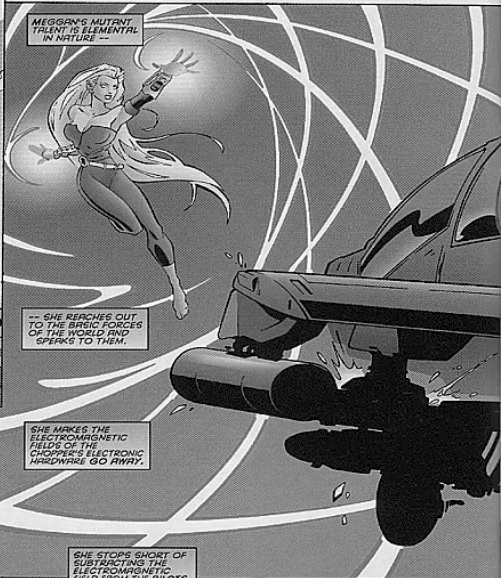
WELL,
THAT'S ONE
DOWN.

I
HOPE KURT
REMEMBERS HE
DOESN'T HAVE A
LIFEJACKET...



Ach.

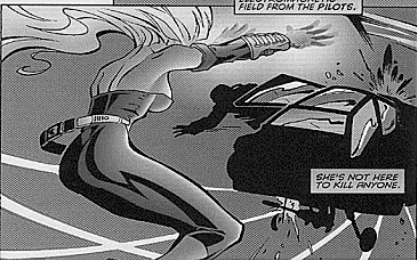
MEGGAN'S MUTANT
TALENT IS ELEMENTAL
IN NATURE —



-- SHE REACHES OUT
TO THE BASIC FORCES
OF THE WORLD AND
SPEAKS TO THEM.

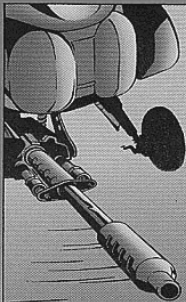
SHE MAKES THE
ELECTROMAGNETIC
FIELDS OF THE
CHOPPER'S ELECTRONIC
HARDWARE GO AWAY.

SHE STOPS SHORT OF
SUBTRACTING THE
ELECTROMAGNETIC
FIELD FROM THE PILOTS.



SHE'S NOT HERE
TO KILL ANYONE.





A GUN SWIVELS
TOWARD THE OCEAN --



HIS ABILITY WORKS BEST
ALONG HORIZONTAL LINES.

UPWARD TELEPORTS
ARE LESS RELIABLE.



AND THEY HURT.

MEGGAN!



HANG
ON A MINUTE,
KURT -- I'LL
BE RIGHT
THERE --

HEY!



DON'T
YOU SHOOT
AT ME.



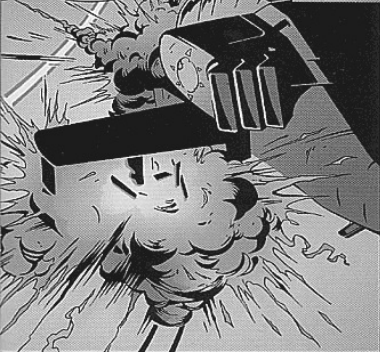
YOU
WANT TO
PLAY WITH
FIRE?

I'LL
SHOW YOU
FIRE --



AND
YOU UP
THERE!

DON'T
YOU LOOK
SO SMUG!



-- HERE'S THE
PROPELLANTS THAT
FIRE YOUR BULLETS.
I'LL LIGHT THEM UP
SO YOU CAN SEE
THEM BETTER!



I'VE
TAKEN THEIR
GUNS OFF,
AND I'LL DO
WORSE TO
YOU --

-- IF
YOU DON'T
JUMP OUT OF
THAT HELICOPTER
RIGHT THIS
MINUTE!



DID
YOU SEE
MEP? I WAS VERY
SIGOURNEY
WEAVER, I
THOUGHT.

CAN WE
GO HOME
NOW,
KURT?



JA...
JUST
AS SOON AS
MY ARMS SHRINK
BACK TO THEIR
NORMAL LENGTH,
WE CAN GO
HOME...



TO
THINK, IN
MY DAYS WITH
THE CIRCUS I
THRIVED ON
SUCH DARING
ACTS.

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LONDON: AS EXCALIBUR'S MIDNIGHT RUNNER SLIDES OVER ITS SPIRES AND WATERS, CLOKED.

ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO THIS, BRIAN? WE CAN STILL TURN BACK...

KITTY, IF SHINOBI SHAW AND HIS BLASTED NEW YORK HELLFIRE CLUB ARE ASKING FOR HELP —

-- IF THEY CAN'T UNRAVEL WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE LONDON CLUB CHAPTER --

-- THEN IT HAS TO BE FAIRLY SERIOUS, AND WELL WORTH MY TIME.

PARTICULARLY IF THIS MUTANT MOUNTAINJOY CHARACTER HAS INFILTRATED THEM, AS SHAW BELIEVES. THE FILES SAY MOUNTAINJOY KILLS LIKE YOU OR I BREATHE.

SHAW'S A SNAKE, AND NO ONE CAN BE TRUSTED.

RAHNE'S GOT A POINT.

DROPHATCH OPENING.

I'LL BE CAREFUL, ALL RIGHT? I'LL STAY IN TOUCH.

MAKE SURE MEGGAN GETS THE NOTE I WROTE HER -- THIS ALL HAPPENED TOO QUICKLY FOR US TO SAY GOODBYE.

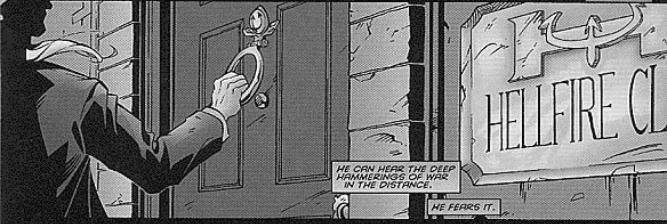


AND BRIAN BRADDOCK
RELEASES HIMSELF INTO
THE LONDON AIR.

HE WAS HAPPY
JUST TO BUILD
THINGS.

BUT HE HAD
GIVEN THE
NAMES AND
COSTUMES
AND WARS
UP.

AS HE STEPS
INTO THE SKY, HIS
POWERS IGNITE --
THE POWERS OF THE
CAPTAIN BRITAIN HE
ONCE WAS, A FUSION
OF WILD GENES AND
OLD MAGIC.



HE CAN HEAR THE DEEP
HAMMERINGS OF WAR
IN THE DISTANCE.

HE FEARS IT.

HELLFIRE CLUB





I SHOULD NEVER
HAVE FOUGHT FOR
THE RECONCILIATION,
YOU SEE.



YOU CAN'T FORCE ORDER
ON SOMETHING AS CHAOTIC
AS PERSONALITY, WHICH
IS FORMED BY RANDOM
EVENTS AND LINKAGES.

Um, DOUGIE...
I DON'T MEAN TO
WORRY YOU, LADIE,
BUT YE SEEM TO HAVE
TAKEN ROOT
A BIT...

HA!



Oh, I
KNOW.

I WANT TO SEE IF
I CAN FEEL WHAT
MEGANN MUST FEEL,
IN HER ELEMENTAL
TALENT --

-- THE PULSE OF THE
EARTH, OF ITS LIFE-
FIELDS. IT JUST...
OCCURRED TO ME.

I'VE SET MY BRAIN
TO ACCESS AND LINK
VARIOUS EXPERIENCES
AND IDEAS AT COMPLETE
RANDOM, JUST TO SEE
WHAT HAPPENS.



IT WAS QUITE A
PARRADIGM SHIFT,
TO COME TO THAT
CONCLUSION.

LIKE PEOPLE, I
SHOULD JUST
SEE WHAT HAPPENS.



I SHALL
EITHER COME
OUT OF IT WITH
AN INTEGRATED
PERSONALITY, OR
I SHALL NOT.

DO NOT
WORRY, MOIRA
EVERYTHING
WILL BE FINE.



I WANT
TO WATCH
THE SUN
GO DOWN.

III OIRA MacTAGGERT
IS A DOCTOR.

SHE DISLIKES TRUSTING
TO A SELF-DIAGNOSIS.

SHE DOESN'T
LIKE IT AT ALL.



PETER
WISDOM,
WHAT ARE YOU
UP TO, CREEPING
AROUND LIKE
THAT?

SSSSSH!

BE
VERY
QUIET.

I'M
HUNTING
FLYING
RATS.

YOU MEAN
KITTY'S PET
DRAGON?

OCH,
THEY'RE
ALL GOING
MAD...



YOU'LL
NEVER TAKE
ME ALIVE,
COPPER.

C'MERE,
LOCKHEED...

... UNCLE
PETE'S GOT
A PRESENT FOR
YOU... JUST
GIVE ME MY
CIGARETTES
BACK...

... YOU
THIEVING, STUPID-
LOOKING SON OF
A DRUG-CRAZED
ANTEATER...





6 **B**ENEATH LONDON:
A MAN TEACHES AN
AUDIENCE OF SEWER RATS
SOME BRAND-NEW WORDS.



HIS NAME IS SCRATCH,
AND HE IS AN AGENT
OF BLACK AIR.

THIS MEANS THAT HE
IS OVERQUALIFIED
TO SLOSH AROUND
IN SEWERS.



THIS MEANS HE IS THE SOLE
AGENT WITH THE CORRECT
CLEARANCE TO SEE WHAT HE'S
SEEING, HERE UNDER LONDON.

WHAT HE'S SEEING
IS CENTURIES OLD.
WHAT HE'S SEEING
HASN'T BEEN SEEN
SINCE IT WAS BUILT.



AND BOTH BLACK AIR
AND THE HELLFIRE CLUB
NEED WHAT'S INSIDE.

HE WONDERS
WHETHER WHAT'S
INSIDE WANTS
TO COME OUT.

HOWEVER, HE IS
THE DESIGNATED
LIAISON BETWEEN
BLACK AIR AND
THE HELLFIRE
CLUB.



VERY ATTRACTIVE.

MAY I BE OF ASSISTANCE, SIR?

YES.



I DEMAND AN IMMEDIATE AUDIENCE WITH THE INNER CIRCLE OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB.

I AM NOT INTERESTED IN PROTOCOL OR CORRECTNESS. I AM HERE BY RIGHT TO THE COURTLY POSITION OF BLACK BISHOP.



I SEE.

I AM RUTLEDGE, MANSERVANT TO THE INNER CIRCLE.

COME WITH ME, SIR.

AND MIGHT I ADD THAT I KNEW YOUR FATHER, MR. BRADDOCK?



REALLY?

BUT HOW DID YOU --

MY FAMILY HAS A GENETIC DISPOSITION TOWARDS PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY, MR. BRADDOCK.

WE HAVE SERVED THE HELLFIRE CLUB FOR GENERATIONS.



YOUR FATHER WAS ONE OF MY FAVORITE PEOPLE HERE.

I WISH YOU WELL.

SIMPLY ENTER AND MAKE YOUR PETITION.

GOOD LUCK, SIR.

THANK YOU, RUTLEDGE. I HOPE WE WILL TALK AGAIN.



I AM BRIAN BRADDOCK, SON OF SIR JAMES BRADDOCK, AND I CLAIM HIS SEAT AS BISHOP OF THE INNER CIRCLE BY RIGHT OF ANCESTRY.

THE OLD WAY, THE DIRECT WAY.

YOU KNOW YOUR TRADITION, MR. BRADDOCK.

I AM BLACK QUEEN HERE, AND I BID YOU COME FORWARD.



MY KINGS, RED AND BLACK; DOES THE COURT HEAR ME ON THIS?

INDEED, WE DO.

A BRADDOCK IN THE CIRCLE AGAIN, VERY GOOD, VERY GOOD...



NO!
I AM RED BISHOP, AND I WILL NOT COUNTENANCE THIS INSULT!

THE BALANCE OF RED AND BLACK HERE IS ALREADY TOO THICK! THERE SHOULD ONLY BE ONE COLOR IN RULE HERE!



I CHALLENGE YOU TO A DUEL FOR THE SOLE BISHOPRIC OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB!

RED
BISHOPP?

Mmmmm.

WE CHANGED THE
OPPOSING COLOR
TO RED, FROM WHITE,
TO DISTANCE OURSELVES
FROM THE COARSE
AMERICAN BRANCH
OF THE HELLFIRE
CLUB.

I SHALL KILL
YOU A THOUSAND
TIMES OVER, FOR I
AM CRUEL AND
MIGHTY --

I WAS
GOING TO
ASK --

I
SPIT IN THE
MILK OF YOUR
MOTHER --

COULD
YOU PLEASE
BE QUIET?

I GUESS THAT MEANS
YOU BECOME BLACK
BISHOP, MISTER
BRADDOCK.

WELCOME
TO THE INNER
CIRCLE. LET US
BRING YOU UP
TO DATE ON
BUSINESS...

"NOW, TIME TO FIND
OUT WHICH OF THEM
IS MOUNTJOY?"

MUIR ISLAND,
AT THE DEATH
OF DAYLIGHT.

I...
I DON'T
EVEN KNOW
HOW LONG
I'VE BEEN
RUNNING
FOR.

IT ALL
HAPPENED SO
QUICKLY.

THE WEIRD
HAPPENINGS
ORGANIZATION HAD
TAKEN GUARDIANSHIP OF
THE WARPIES, THE CHILDREN
MUTATED BY THE
EIGHTIES' REALITY
WARP.

I WAS
WORKING
WITH THEM,
HELPING
THEM.

THE
W.H.O. RAN
ITSELF. I PAID
LESS ATTENTION
TO ADMINISTRATION
AND POLITICS IN
AND AROUND
THE W.H.O.

I NEVER
NOTICED
BLACK
AIR.

BLACK
AIR STARTED
OUT AS A SECRET
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE
UNIT CHARGED WITH
RECOVERY OF UNUSUAL
ARTIFACTS THAT COULD
BE INTERPOLATED
INTO WEAPONS
DESIGN.

THEY TOOK
OVER W.H.O.'S ROLE
TO OBSERVE AND DEAL
WITH PARANORMAL
OCCURRENCES.

THEY
WERE BACKED
BY A GOVERNMENT
VOTE. THAT VOTE
WAS BOUGHT BY
THE HELLFIRE
CLUB.

NOT THAT I DON'T BELIEVE ALISTAIR, I'VE KNOWN HIM FOR YEARS, BUT --

-- PETE, YOU USED TO WORK FOR BLACK AIR -- NOW MUCH OF THIS DO YOU KNOW TO BE TRUE?

I WASN'T AROUND AT THE BEGINNING, BUT IT STARTS EXPLAINING A COUPLE OF THINGS...

WHY DID YOU RUN, ALISTAIR?

WE HELPED YOU FREE THE WARPIES. WE KNEW YOU WERE HAPPY TEACHING THEM.

BLACK AIR KILLED AND DISSECTED THE WARPIES.

RESEARCH.

THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE AMASSING ALL THOSE THINGS FOR.

Oh, THEY SAY THEY'RE TAKING THEM OUT OF UNSAFE HANDS, PUTTING THEM IN SECURE STORAGE...

... BUT THEY AND THE LONDON HELLFIRE CLUB HAVE PLANS FOR THEM.

THE HELLFIRE CLUB USED TO BE MADE UP OF THE COUNTRY'S RULING CLASS. YOU SEE, BLACK AIR WILL MAKE THE CURRENT CLUB THE RULING CLASS AGAIN.

BLACK AIR WILL KEEP THE STATUS QUO GOING IN THE BACKGROUND -- KEEP THE COUNTRY DULL AND MEDIOCRE AND IN PAIN. THE WAY IT IS NOW.

THE CLUB'S INNER CIRCLE WILL FEED OFF THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE COUNTRY IN PRIVATE.

SHADOW RULERS THAT EVEN THE PRIME MINISTER WON'T KNOW ABOUT.

I SAW THE PLANS.

THAT'S WHY THEY WANT ME DEAD.

AND THEY WANT EXCALIBUR DEAD TOO.

LIGHT FALLS DOWN ON
HIJIR LIKE VELVET, A MESS
OF SILVER SPRINKLED OVER.

DOUGLOCK WATCHES WITH NEW EYES,
WORDS AND PICTURES BURSTING LIKE
WAVES OVER HIS HUMMING MIND.

HE IS BECOMING
ONE PERSON.

BUT A SINGLE
THING NAGS
AT HIS WILDLY
RANDOMIZING
LOGIC CENTER.

ONE SILVER STAR IS
GROWING BIGGER.

AND DARKER.

IT IS A BIRD —
NO, A JETPLANE.

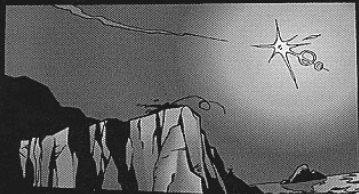
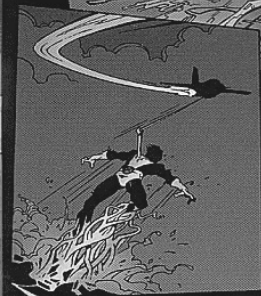
THE RANDOM CONNECTIONS OF
HIS MIND SEEK TO LAY METAPHOR
OVER FACT, CONFUSING HIM.

THERE IS A FLASH
OF SILVER IN THE
HEART OF IT.

IT'S ENGINE
HOWLS.



HIS HEART
BREAKS.



TO BE CONTINUED

SWORDSTROKES

Dear Swordstrokes,

Congratulations, you've finally done it! EXCALIBUR is now at the very top of my "must read" list. Even above both X-MEN titles. I think the major reason is Warren Ellis. This guy is great. I just love his stories.

For a long time I read the book because I love Kitty, Kurt and Rachel, but now it is one of the best along with, in my opinion, the two X-MEN titles and GENERATION X.

And recently there have been a lot of great artists, too. According to the letters pages, Carlos Pacheco will be the new regular penciler. I think that's a great idea. I enjoyed his work in both the BISHOP and the STARJAMMERS Limited Series.

About the story--just the first page alone was worth the price of the comic. It's nice to see Pete's feeling better. I appreciated Pete's newly found respect for Moira ("MacTaggart knows her stuff") and was amused at how he still picks on her (and vice versa). I think Pete's becoming a great character. Keep him around.

Speaking of around...why was Brian tinkering on a plane? Hasn't anyone told him about what happened to his sister? About how Sabretooth ripped out her guts and left her for dead? I mean, they're family--twins, no less--you'd think someone from Xavier's would have at least called. How did Brian react when the X-Men "died" on national TV way back when? And how did Betsy react when Brian was lost in time? Nobody knows, because those stories were never told. Come on, guys. Remember the way Brian popped his shirt buttons

clean off and had to be restrained by Phoenix when Arcade kidnapped his ex-girlfriend, Courtney Ross? And this is his sister who almost died! If that's any comparison, Brian ought to be out for blood this time.

Another thing about this issue that bugged me is on page four, when Kurt says, "Hank McCoy is expecting a call from me, so Guten Morgen," and then teleports. "Guten Morgen," when translated, means "Good Morning," not "Goodbye" which is "Auf Wiedersehen."

This reminds me of two other occurrences that were really bad--issue #4, page 11: Meggan walked in the room and Kurt said, "Wo bist du?", which means, "Where are you?" Kurt probably meant to say, "Wie gehts?", literally, "How goes it?" or "How are you?" Also in issue #75, Page 15, when Amanda showed up at the door, Kurt said, "Auf wiedersehen, Fraulein." Why would he be saying goodbye if she was just coming in? And someone always messes up "was" and spells it "vas" like it sounds. Kurt's not dumb, so please don't make him sound dumb. Being German myself, I'm disappointed to see this happen. (I wonder what Gambit is actually saying...?) I'm nowhere near fluent, but please next time ask someone who is.

But anyway...cool new use of Meggan's powers, guys--I wonder if there's a limit to what else she can do?

I was intrigued by Rahne's talk with Reverend Craig. I figured there had to be some close tie between them--the hints she was dropping about him and her mother (it's not just that she's a mutant that

bothers him, eh?)--no wonder he hates her so. Kudos to Rahne for finding the strength and courage to stand up to him.

A question about Kitty's father--is he involved with Black Air? If so, Kitty's going to have one heck of an emotional battle ahead of her. Imagine being betrayed by your own father...

Krista Schneidereit
(Address withheld by request)

Wow! Lots of good points, Krista. First off, thanks for placing us in such good company on your "to read" list. We're blushing. Telling entertaining stories is truly a collaborative process so we'll pass along kudos to all.

And you're certainly on the money about Psylocke and Brian. The X-Men did call Brian to let him know about his sister, he did blow his top, but Jean assured him everything was being done for Psylocke that possibly could be done.

They also let him know that Sabretooth was now X-Factor's property--and problem! You're right, Krista, we should have let you be there and we apologize. There's just so much story to be told, sometimes we drop the ball. Thanks for calling us on it. For the details on Sabretooth check out the Sabretooth special that came out last December, by Fabian Nicieza and Gary Frank!

As for Brian tinkering on the plane...it makes him feel better. Makes him feel creative rather than destructive. Doesn't mean he's not having some mighty destructive thoughts...about Sabretooth, though. And they're bound to run into each other

sooner or later... Britannic vs. Sabretooth, hmmm.

And about the butchering of the German language--we're sorry! We promise to study up on our German before we misuse it again! Or maybe we'll just have Nightcrawler discover he's really from Spain--then Carlos can advise us on our Spanish till the cows come home. What do you think, Krista? Just kidding. Nightcrawler has trouble rolling his R's.

And lastly, we're not sure what kind of trouble Kitty's father has gotten into this time, but we're pretty sure he's in over his head! Stay tuned, Krista!

Dear Swordstrokes,

I read comics for the whole experience. The art, the story, the characters, the fun and even the letters page. Issue #93 was a complete experience. Warren Ellis had it all wrapped up with this story. It was a complete human experience running the gamut of emotions from humor, embarrassment and joy, to fear, pain and liberation.

I'm glad to see Rahne is growing up. This was definitely the right time for her to confront the Reverend Craig. She was still young enough to remember the pain, but had gathered enough experience to feel confident in who she is.

I really like the Pete Wisdom character, and I know why Kitty digs him so much--he is a lot like Wolverine! He doesn't want to let anyone know he cares. He has a checkered past and he appreciates Kitty for who she is. Not to mention the similarities in occasional grumpiness and a tobacco habit...

Your letters page cracked me up this issue, too. You guys are having way too much fun at work, I'm sure.

Now a couple of complaints. I want more Nightcrawler. I want more Nightcrawler. You guys get the idea? And Rory needs an attitude adjustment. And please don't make Meggan too super powerful. No one else will have to work if

she's too powerful.

And in closing Kitty could take Psylocke. She took Sabretooth and Betsy couldn't. Hey, Betsy should go to Muir to recoup and visit Brian, too.

Keep up the good work.

Catherine D. Kobasiuk
111 Hickory Road
Mastic Beach, NY 11951

We're sure Brian would have loved to be at his sister's bedside, but by the time he found out about it, he was needed elsewhere. It's good to hear Psylocke's feeling much better. Brian is planning a visit for the not too far future. Or maybe Psylocke will come visit him....at the London Hellfire Club!

Dear X-People,

First of all, let me say that, even though I'm not a Pete Wisdom fan, his impression of Professor Xavier was quite funny. Kitty's "I am so ashamed" and Kurt's "That's blasphemous" reaction to it made it that much more amazing.

Now, about the story... It's about time somebody gave that narrow minded, fish-eyed fool, Reverend Craig, a piece of his mind!! Rahne was, of course, the perfect choice, and managed to make her point without ever raising her voice. Nice job, Rahne.

See you next month.

Mike McCullough
262 W. Blue Water Run
Selbyrne, DE 19975

Rahne definitely has come a long way, Mike. She's still making peace over her past with the dark and powerful Reverend Craig but her confrontation with him was the first real step toward freeing herself from a painful childhood. Thanks for appreciating her struggles, Mike! We think Rahne's going to grow a lot in the company of her friends, old and new.

Dear Suze and Bob,

After reading EXCALIBUR #93 I thought it was about time to post

off an appreciative scribble to Warren Ellis. Like so many others who have written in, you can color me impressed. His ear for dialogue is largely unsurpassed among the X-scribes, and his black humor, sense of pathos and penchant for parody have quickly secured the comic its own unique feel. Using a blurry-eyed night in the pub to establish a new team order was a brilliantly quirky touch, indicative of his whole approach. Warren has given EXCALIBUR as distinctive a personality as did Alan Davis--entirely different, of course, but just as strong.

Warren's Dream Nails Trilogy was a dark and fascinating story, serving as a perfect introductory vehicle for the slovenly anarchistic Pete Wisdom, and a brutal introduction to both Black Air and the Uncreated.

Also, he seems keen to pursue the development of Meggan and Brian, and this is good--they have been little more than presences on Muir for too long.

With Colossus, the bitter rebuke he received from Kurt shows that Warren is not going to tolerate the Russian's dangerous naivete. Once Piotr is dragged into the '90s, that organic steel is going to seem even harder.

This issue's concentration on Rahne was a good beginning for Moira's prodigal daughter. I'd like to see more degrees of her feral mutation as she becomes a stronger X-player. Moira, too, is fast becoming the equal of Xavier rather than just his wee Scots helper.

I look forward to seeing how the Douglock storyline will play out, hopefully as use is made of both Rory's potentially tragic fate and the deadly threat of the Phalanx. Under Warren, this bigger team will once and for all cast off their irritating reputation as Eurosickies.

Regarding art, it's fabulous news that Carlos Pacheco is coming on as regular penciller. He displayed his obvious talent on the BISHOP Limited Series. His intermittent work on EXCALIBUR has

been top notch, and the excellent STARJAMMERS tale is solid proof of his compatibility with Warren. I anticipate a great partnership growing between these two.

Here's to the future.

Tody Ingram
53 Brook Street
Colchester, Essex CO1 2UT
England, UK

Thanks for the toast to our good fortune, Tody! We're super-psyched for the Warren & Carlos team-up, also!

Which reminds us that we need to let you, the faithful, know that Carlos Pacheco and Bob Wiacek are most definitely our regular art team. They will be back next issue and better than ever, might we add, but then they will be helping out on two, count 'em two, issues of the FANTASTIC FOUR (#415 & #416) which are so good you won't want to miss 'em—even if you're not the most devoted FF reader!

But don't despair! Casey and Tom will be helping us out with issue #99 and Carlos will be joining us again for the big double-sized EXCALIBUR #100!

Dear Suzanne,

Stories that explore the further background and ramifications of actions in the past always have been able to arouse a certain degree of curiosity in me, and EXCALIBUR #93 managed to do the same. A direct tie-in to the events originally portrayed in the classic NEW MUTANTS GRAPHIC NOVEL, the tale called "The Spire" not only brought back some fond memories, but it gave us more fascinating insight into Rahne Sinclair's character.

Of course, bringing back Reverend Craig, the man who hunted Rahne when she was only a child and for sure would have killed her if not for Moira's timely intervention, really was a daring move. Thus, I applaud writer

Warren Ellis's boldness in making the decision to write this story.

While a story like this knows many pitfalls, Warren managed to carefully avoid them, giving the readers some, but definitely not all of the answers surrounding the subject of Rahne and Reverend Craig. Sometimes, it's best to let the mind fill in the blanks; that which has been hinted at drawing a rough outline.

This issue finally showed that Rahne has become as much a responsible young lady from without as she has been from within for quite some years already. Maturity comes with experience, not necessarily with age, and Rahne is the perfect example of that, willing to face the ghosts of her past, willing to accept that past and move on into a bright future.

For a story with such an important message, portrayed in so touching and fascinating a way, I can't do anything else but sincerely congratulate you on a job wonderfully well done.

If you are able to keep this up, it surely will be one of the best issues #100 in the history of modern comic books, I daresay!

Olav Beemer
The Netherlands
Europe

Oh, Olav. You say the nicest things... Actually, not to blow our own horn, but if half of what we've got planned for issue #100 sees print—we're going to knock your well-made socks off!

Dear Swordstrokes,

This letter is probably too late for real effect for EXCALIBUR #100, but a trend needs to be addressed.

In the 1980's, Marvel Comics redefined their placement in the comics market in the field it pioneered and perfected: the team book concept. X-MEN was running strong, the FANTASTIC FOUR reached new heights of success

under John Byrne, and the Avengers reintroduced the Black Knight and gained new members such as Namor. It also started several new team books: THE NEW MUTANTS, ALPHA FLIGHT, WEST COAST AVENGERS, X-FACTOR, and EXCALIBUR. All of these books possessed excellent potential; each also exceeded issue #100.

And there the pattern begins. In NEW MUTANTS #100, the team died, resurrected a few short months later as X-FORCE. In ALPHA FLIGHT #100, Mockingbird, the bride of Hawkeye, died.

In X-FACTOR #100, Multiple Man died (supposedly).

Now EXCALIBUR #100 approaches.

Please continue the trend.

I vote for Meggan. Coping with her sudden demise just may make Captain Britain interesting (i.e. mal-adjusted drunken blowhard) again.

Death to Meggan!

Jeff Kozzi
Providence, RI 02901

Jeff--quite an interesting observation you've made here. We'll make no promises of death to you, but with the onslaught of trouble headed EXCALIBUR's way, we wouldn't rule out a visit from the grim reaper, okay ol' buddy?

next month?
CARLOS PACHECO
AND
BOB WIACEK
ARE BACK AS
EXCALIBUR
SEARCHES FOR
ITS LOST TEAMMATE.
BRIAN IS SEDUCED BY
THE SECRETS OF
THE LONDON
HELLFIRE CLUB,
AND
NIGHTCRAWLER
TAKES CHARGE!

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